# POSITION DESCRIPTION

**General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development**

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| **OVERVIEW** |
| Senate Committee | Banking, Housing Urban Affairs |
| Agency Mission | To create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. |
| Position Overview | The General Counsel is the chief legal advisor to HUD Secretary and other principal staff. The General Counsel oversees legal opinions, advice and services on all HUD programs and activities, litigation, legislative initiatives, enforcement actions and regulations. The General Counsel supervises all staff assigned to the Office of General Counsel at HUD Headquarters and provides professional guidance for staff assigned to the field counsel offices. |
| Compensation | Level IV $155,500 (5 U.S.C. § 5315)[[1]](#endnote-1) |
| Position Reports to | Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Housing and Urban Development |
| **RESPONSIBILITIES** |
| Management Scope | In fiscal 2015, HUD had $35,527 million in outlays and 8,059 total employment. The Office of General Counsel consists of the headquarters organizations, 10 regional offices, 36 offices of counsel and five satellite offices of the Departmental Enforcement Center. |
| Primary Responsibilities | * Manages and directs HUD legal departments, including civil rights programs, general litigation and enforcement actions
* Works with the administration and Congress on program and legislative initiatives involving various aspects of financing, development and preservation of housing
* Develops HUD program regulations and assists in the development of HUD programs and policies
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| Strategic Goals and Priorities | Depends on the policy priorities of the administration |
| **REQUIREMENTS AND COMPETENCIES** |
| Requirements | * Distinguished legal career of at least a decade
* Leadership and management experience
* Experience in large public/private legal entity
* Real estate and mortgage finance background (preferred)
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| Competencies | * Strategic Orientation*:* demonstrates complex thinking abilities, incorporating both analytical and conceptual abilities to manage and develop legal plans and strategies
* Results Orientation: demonstrated ability to be proactive, exercise independent judgment, and manage multiple projects simultaneously; a strong work ethic and a track record of producing high quality work under deadline pressures
* Team Leadership: experience effectively managing geographically-dispersed staff of legal and administrative support professionals
* Collaboration & Influencing*:* proven track record of creating and managing relationships with peer executives inside the organization, outside counsel, and third parties/institutions
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| **PAST APPOINTEES** |
| Helen R. Kanovsky (May 2009 – 2017), Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel, AFL-CIO Housing Investment Trust, Chief of Staff to Senator John Kerry, Executive Vice President and General Counsel of GE Capital Asset Management Corporation |
| Robert M. Couch, (2007 – 2008), President of Government National Mortgage Association, President and CEO of New South Federal Savings Bank, General Counsel and Chief Financial Officer of First Commercial Bancshares |
| Keith Gottfried (2005 – 2006), Senior Vice President-Corporate Affairs and Special Advisor to the CEO, Borland Software Corporation, Corporate Attorney at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, Corporate Attorney at Blank Rome LLP |

# Endnotes

This position description was created with the help of Egon Zehnder, a global executive search firm.

1. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31, May 5, 2017), contains a provision that continues the freeze on the payable pay rates for certain senior political officials at 2013 levels during calendar year 2017. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)